

REMARKS

Responsive to the Office Action mailed on December 28, 2006 in the above-referenced application, Applicant respectfully requests amendment of the above-identified application in the manner identified above and that the patent be granted in view of the arguments presented. No new matter has been added by this amendment.

Present Status of Application

Claims 1 and 3-11 are allowed. Claims 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Goldberg (US 5,458,312) in view of Tipton (US 2,433,172). Claims 22-24 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 13-16 are withdrawn from consideration.

In this paper, claim 17 is amended to include the limitations of claim 22. Claims 13 and 14 are amended to depend from claim 1. Claims 22-24 are canceled without prejudice. Thus, on entry of this amendment, claims 1, 3-11, 13-21 and 25 remain in the application.

Insofar as this amendment merely cancels claims, adopts examiner suggestions, corrects informalities, and requires only a cursory review by the examiner, it is believed to be proper under 37 CFR 1.116. MPEP 714.12.

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in light of the amendments and the remarks contained below.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the allowance of claims 1 and 3-11 and the indication in the Office Action that claims 22-24 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Insofar as claim 17 now includes all of the limitations of claim 22, Applicant submits that the claim is now in condition for

allowance. Applicant further submits that claims 18-21 and 25 are also in condition for allowance by virtue of their dependency from claim 17.

Withdrawn Claims 13-16

As noted by the Examiner, upon allowance of a generic claim, Applicant will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which are written in dependent form or otherwise include all the limitations of the generic claim as provided by 37 CFR 1.141.

Insofar as claims 13-16 depend either directly or indirectly from allowed claim 1, Applicant respectfully requests the consideration of these claims. In this regard, Applicant submits that claims 13-16 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 1.

Foreign Priority Claim

Acknowledgment of Applicant's claim to foreign priority under 35 USC 119(a)-(d) or (f) and receipt of the certified copies of the priority document(s) is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

The Applicant believes that the application is now in condition for allowance and respectfully requests so. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees that may be required or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. **502447**. In particular, if this response is not timely filed, then the commissioner is authorized to treat this response as including a petition to extend the time period pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) requesting an extension of time of the number of months necessary to make this response timely filed and the petition fee due in connection therewith may be charged to Deposit Account No. **502447**.

Respectfully submitted,

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